



NATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM  
OFFICE OF THE MANAGER  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20305

IN REPLY REFER TO:

12 APR 1969.

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Dear [redacted]

I have been following with interest the initial reactions to recent draft policy memoranda and their relation to our NCS Long Range Concept Study and believe it is appropriate to give an indication of my personal views on the present NCS and its management.

The basic Presidential charter calls for a "unified governmental communications system" which shall be "established and developed by linking together, improving, and extending, on an evolutionary basis, the communications facilities and components of the various Federal agencies." This statement requires that there should be some degree of compatibility developed as an initial step, an evolutionary interconnection capability worked into the System at the earliest feasible moment, and a capability for complete interoperability (but not necessarily exercised on a continuous basis) at some point in the future guided along a programmed path.

The NCS as originally activated, consisted of several completely separate systems and/or networks with a minimal ability to inter-communicate. This situation appears to have been the very reason for the establishment of the NCS. It is quite clear that precipitous steps to "unify" these systems would have been disruptive and very expensive. It is equally clear, however, that there are certain essential steps which should be completed promptly to bring these systems toward greater compatibility so that they could, in fact, "provide necessary communications for the Federal Government under all conditions ranging from a normal

situation to national emergencies and international crises including nuclear attack." Among these steps are a National Precedence system, common standards, practices, methods, and procedures in all aspects of communications operations, and operational planning for and testing of the techniques by which these various networks or portions thereof would be inter-communicative in other than normal situations.

As to the operation of the NCS, I do not foresee any significant changes in the current responsibilities of either the Manager or the Operating Agencies with respect to the actual day-by-day operation of the existing component networks of the NCS. I do not seek additional responsibilities at this time for at least two reasons. First, considering the major expense and trauma involved in a major change at this time, I do not believe it to be a desirable move; and secondly, I neither have, nor anticipate having, adequate resources to undertake day-by-day operational control of the several networks.

Recognizing our common charter, however, for responsiveness now to emergency situations, the commonality of standards, methods, and procedures must be further developed and implemented as rapidly as possible. They must continue to be exercised within the NCS and refined constantly to insure a knowledgeable and practical response to other-than-normal conditions. Sufficient current status information will also need to be provided on a continuing basis to the Manager, so as to be available in case of emergency.

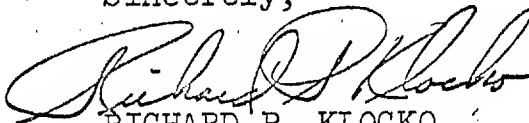
Since we are in fact charged with the provision and operation of a "unified" system, our longer range objective must be the achievement of such a system. All of the component networks are in a constant state of flux, with replacement, improvements, and replenishments taking place on a continuous basis. NCS common concepts, doctrine, system design, planning, and engineering will form the path which all component network development must follow in departing from the present fragmentation to arrive at a National Communications System which provides the interconnection and ultimately the interoperability which the President should expect. In this regard, I intend to develop, in coordination with the NCS Operating Agencies, specific design concepts, standards, and criteria and technical and operational system planning guidance which will establish the parameters for NCS design, implementation and operation for the future NCS configuration. Necessarily, provision

must be made for component system plans to be checked against the NCS system design guidance to insure consonance and compatibility. Provision must also be made for the establishment of an overall implementation schedule.

In the aggregate, the steps outlined above will develop and specify the role which I will perform as Manager, NCS in accordance with my current directives. Hopefully, agreement can be reached among all NCS Operating Agencies concerning current actions and the broad outlines of concept and planning. In the longer term field of technical system standards and design, leading to the future NCS, the engineering and feasibility aspects assume greater importance and some considered technical judgments may be essential, while at the same time satisfying the mutually agreed operational requirement. It seems to me that the actions I have outlined above will lead us to a "unified" system which takes into account the National requirement as well as the requirements of each of the component members of the NCS.

I would appreciate any comments you may have on these matters. Please note that these are my current views with respect to the NCS as now organized. I intend to reexamine them continually as a result of any opinions and concepts you may express and also as the Long Range Concept Study provides further definition of problems and alternatives.

Sincerely,



RICHARD P. KLOCKO  
Lieutenant General, USAF  
Manager

*Same letter to all Operating Agencies.  
Memo to ASD(I&L)*